

REMARKS

Claims 1, 14, and 15 have been amended to clarify the subject matter regarded as the invention. Claims 1-20 are pending.

The Examiner has rejected claims 1-15 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Shanklin et al in view of Salapura. Shanklin teaches multiple sensors connected at an internetworking device for detecting unauthorized signatures to or from a local network. Salapura teaches assigning packets to network processors using a result of a hashing function. Col 6 lines 18-20 of Salapura recites, “The result ‘r’ of the hash function is a number in the range (0 - n-1), wherein ‘n’ is the number of processors.” Hence the entire hash value result of Salapura is used to assign packets to network processors. Shanklin and Salapura do not teach, either singularly or in combination, using a number bits of a hash value, wherein “the number of bits used is not necessarily the total number of bits of the hash value” as amended in claims 1, 14 and 15. Support for the amendment can be found without limitation on lines 3-13 on page 14 of the specification. For example, the hash value of the claims can be larger than the number of processors, and only a portion of the hash value can be used to assign the data packet one of the processors. Since the number of bits used to assign data packets to processors can be changed without modifying the hashing function, future additional processors can be more easily added than compared to the system of Salapura. Therefore, claims 1, 14, and 15 are believed to be allowable.

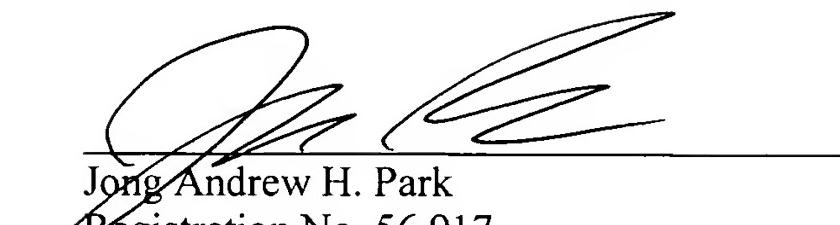
Claims 2-13 depends from claim 1 and are believed to be allowable for the same reasons described above.

Claims 16-20 depends from claim 15 and are believed to be allowable for the same reasons described above.

Reconsideration of the application and allowance of all claims are respectfully requested based on the preceding remarks. If at any time the Examiner believes that an interview would be helpful, please contact the undersigned.

Respectfully submitted,

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